GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4286
ANSWERED ON:11.08.2016
Desiltation of Ganga River
Gaikwad Dr. Sunil Baliram;Gupta Shri Sudheer;Khadse Smt. Raksha Nikhil;Kirtikar Shri Gajanan Chandrakant;Mahato Shri Bidyut Baran;Singh Shri Kunwar Haribansh

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANAGA REJUVENATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to desilt Ganga river, if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether the Government has prepared a roadmap for desiltation of Ganga river and constituted a committee to prepare guidelines etc. in this regard, if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the committee has to establish difference between desilting and sand mining along with emphasise on a need for desilting for ecology/e-flow of the river Ganga;
(d) if so, the time by which the committee is likely to submit its report; and
(e) whether the Government proposes to take up desilting work in the major dams where the holding capacity of water has reduced to measurable term, if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT AND GANGA REJUVENATION
(DR. SANJEEV KUMAR BALYAN)
(a) Erosion and deposition of silt is a natural process in alluvial rivers and the rivers pick up and drop their silt load as per their regime condition. In 2006, a Committee headed by Dr B.K. Mittal, former Chairman, Central Water Commission (CWC) had studied the siltation pattern in a few rivers in India and concluded that siltation was not pronounced and alarming. The Committee's recommendations inter alia include that de-silting in general in major rivers is not feasible technically due to several reasons like non-sustainability, non- availability of vast land required for the disposal of dredged material etc.

The cost effective measures for removal of drainage congestion in specific reaches of rivers for channel capacity improvement and navigation purposes are, however, formulated and implemented by concerned States / Agencies as per requirement. No proposal has been received in the Ministry for large scale de-silting of river Ganga for the purpose of improving channel capacity. However, the Inland Waterways Authority under the Ministry of shipping has formulated a plan for development of 1620 km reach of river Ganga between Haldiaand Allahabad as National Waterway No.1 envisaging dredging of river Ganga in various reaches to maintain navigable depth.

(b) , (c) & (d) In view of the concerns by various States about loss of land and properties due to river bed/bank erosion and damages due to floods, caused by spilling river water as a result of heavy siltation of river, the Ministry has constituted an Expert Committee on Erosion and Siltation in Rivers (ECESR) under the chairmanship of Director(CWPRS) Pune, & CE(HSO) to study the problems of erosion, siltation and requirement of desiltation/dredging of rivers, particularly Ganga and Brahmaputra rivers and suggest remedial measures. The Committee will study and review the recommendations of various important expert committees constituted in the past on siltation of rivers and recommend suitable measures of erosion control and appropriate combination of raising & strengthening of existing embankments, measures to control siltation of river beds and techno-environmentally permissible de-siltation/dredging of river beds for providing adequate waterway to safe passage of flows in floods. A time frame of 6 months has been indicated for submission of the report by the Committee.

(e) The de-siltation of reservoirs on large scale has not been considered techno-economically viable as it is associated with the problems of disposal of excavated earth and high cost of repeated de-siltation, etc. In order to assist the State Governments in measures of repair, renovation of water bodies, the Government of India is providing central assistance under the Plan Scheme "Repair, Renovation and Restoration(RRR)".

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